



Presents

BARRINGTON AREA REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY PLAN

2025

www.bacog.org





BACOG began over 50 years ago, meeting for the first time on April 25, 1970, as an initiative to ensure a thoughtful, coordinated approach to the region's development. Today, BACOG operates as a voluntary council of local governments in the Barrington area committed to regional collaboration. This includes cooperative strategies for legislative advocacy, education, building partnerships, and protecting groundwater.



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I. BACKGROUND

Committed community members and dedicated local government officials guided the development of the BACOG area. Natural recreation areas, such as the Cuba Marsh Nature Preserve, South Barrington Conservancy, Fetherling Park, Tower Lakes Nature Preserve, and numerous others, contribute to the unique nature of the Barrington area and are treasured assets for us all. The same is true for our local schools, commercial areas, public transit station, and job centers. But we recognize today that they could be enjoyed by even more of our region's residents if there was better non-motorized access to and between such resources.

Individual BACOG member communities are already working to address local needs and priorities for crosswalks, bike paths, and other means to improve connections to resources within their communities. BACOG convened a Connectivity Committee to support this work and develop a regionwide plan to (a) **expand access** to area resources, (b) **improve safety** for these non-motorized connections, and (c) position us to **advocate as a region** for projects across municipal, township, and county borders.

The plan presented in these pages is the culmination of the Connectivity Committee's work. Implementing the projects identified here would enhance the quality of life for residents across the greater Barrington Area.

II. THE CONNECTIVITY COMMITTEE

In 2023, BACOG's Executive Board established a Connectivity Committee to address the potential for improved connectivity across the region. The purpose of this committee is to:

- Examine the feasibility of new bike / pedestrian paths that could improve non-motorized access to nature preserves, parks, commercial centers, public transit links, and schools;
- Support the ongoing bike and pedestrian path related efforts in each BACOG community;
- Develop a BACOG Area Connectivity Plan; and
- Advocate on behalf of the region for its implementation.

The active participation by each BACOG member community has been a critical aspect of its work to date and is the key to its future success. The Committee's members include village and township elected officials, staff, and community volunteers. These volunteers bring a range of perspectives and extensive expertise about non-motorized transportation use in the region. Significant support also was provided by BACOG GIS Analyst, Tomasz Szczuka, along with BACOG Program Coordinator, Mary Tarpey, and Executive Director, Kimberly Beattie Saunders.

CHAIRMAN:

Greg Rusteberg, Deer Park

MEMBERS:

Charlie Thalheimer, Barrington
Laura Ekstrom, Barrington Hills
Helen Edwards, Barrington Township
John Langan, Barrington Township
Brenda Brainerd, Lake Barrington
Peter Schallmoser, Lake Barrington
Brad Fritz, South Barrington
Dave Burnidge, Tower Lakes
Rick Steffen, Tower Lakes

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At its inaugural meeting, the Committee discussed its directive from the BACOG Executive Board, and adopted guiding principles to serve as a framework for their work to strengthen connectivity in the BACOG region:

- Enhance Region residents' quality of life.
- Improve and/or create safe, non-motorized access between residential areas and:
 - Schools
 - Natural and recreation areas such as parks, nature preserves, and lakes;
 - Commercial areas and job centers.
- Respect the priorities and ongoing initiatives of individual local governments, while encouraging projects that expand access to these resources for citizens across borders.
- Seek and utilize input from community members across the BACOG region.

III. INITIAL PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

As a starting point, each BACOG member provided the Committee with a list of projects under consideration by their community. These included projects designed to increase safe access to schools, local businesses, and parks and to create non-motorized passage to locations throughout the region. The Committee also reviewed the Comprehensive Plan for each BACOG member community to understand longterm goals for community character and transportation options. Their research revealed that every Community Comprehensive Plan detailed goals related to providing safe, non-motorized transportation options, and noted the need for intergovernmental cooperation to achieve such objectives. Notable examples include:

- *“Pedestrian and bike paths should be an integral part of the transportation system, permitting alternative modes of movement to major activity centers of the Village, and providing recreation opportunities...Looking ahead, it is important to ensure local bike routes provide linkages to the regional trail system, schools, forest preserves, in addition to surrounding communities.” ~Deer Park*
- *“The ability to walk or cycle safely within the community is an intrinsic value to living here...Additional walking paths would enhance community assets and the enjoyment of the natural resources in Tower Lakes. Walking paths have been shown to have a positive impact on property sales and to promote physical activity, fitness, and health.” ~Tower Lakes*
- *“Cooperation among neighboring communities will be especially crucial to implementing bikeway routes and greenway corridors.” ~Barrington*

The Committee continued its analysis by searching for opportunities to coordinate with other governments:

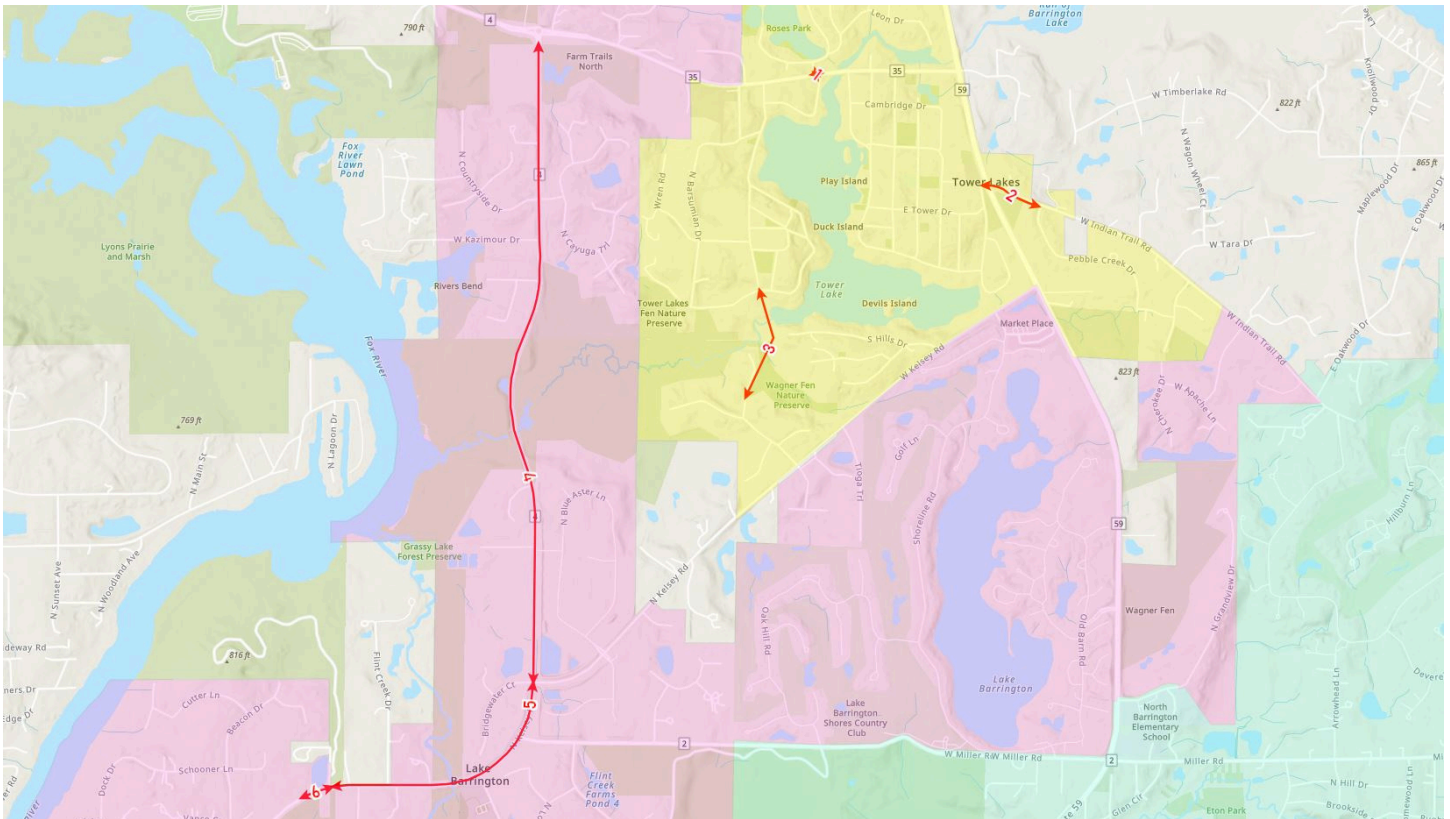
- They reviewed **road construction** projects in long-range plans by the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways, Lake County Division of Transportation, and the State of Illinois Department of Transportation. They specifically looked for locations scheduled for road improvements or maintenance in the coming years that could benefit from the addition of pedestrian or bike connection points.
- The Committee members also examined **bike and pedestrian** paths under consideration by overlapping governmental entities, including the transportation departments identified above, as well as the Forest Preserves of Cook County and the Lake County Forest Preserves.
- They analyzed connectivity recommendations from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, our neighboring council of governments – the Northwest Municipal Conference’s – Multimodal Transportation Plan, and individual BACOG member bike and pedestrian paths.

BACOG GIS staff used publicly available data to create a map overlaying all projects identified through this process.

Unfortunately, it revealed a sparse number of projects planned by County and State governments for this region despite apparent gaps in connectivity.



INITIAL NORTHERN PROJECTS



1. Crosswalk at Circle Dr. and Roberts Rd.

2. Crosswalk at Essex Rd/Indian Trail Rd and IL Rte. 59.

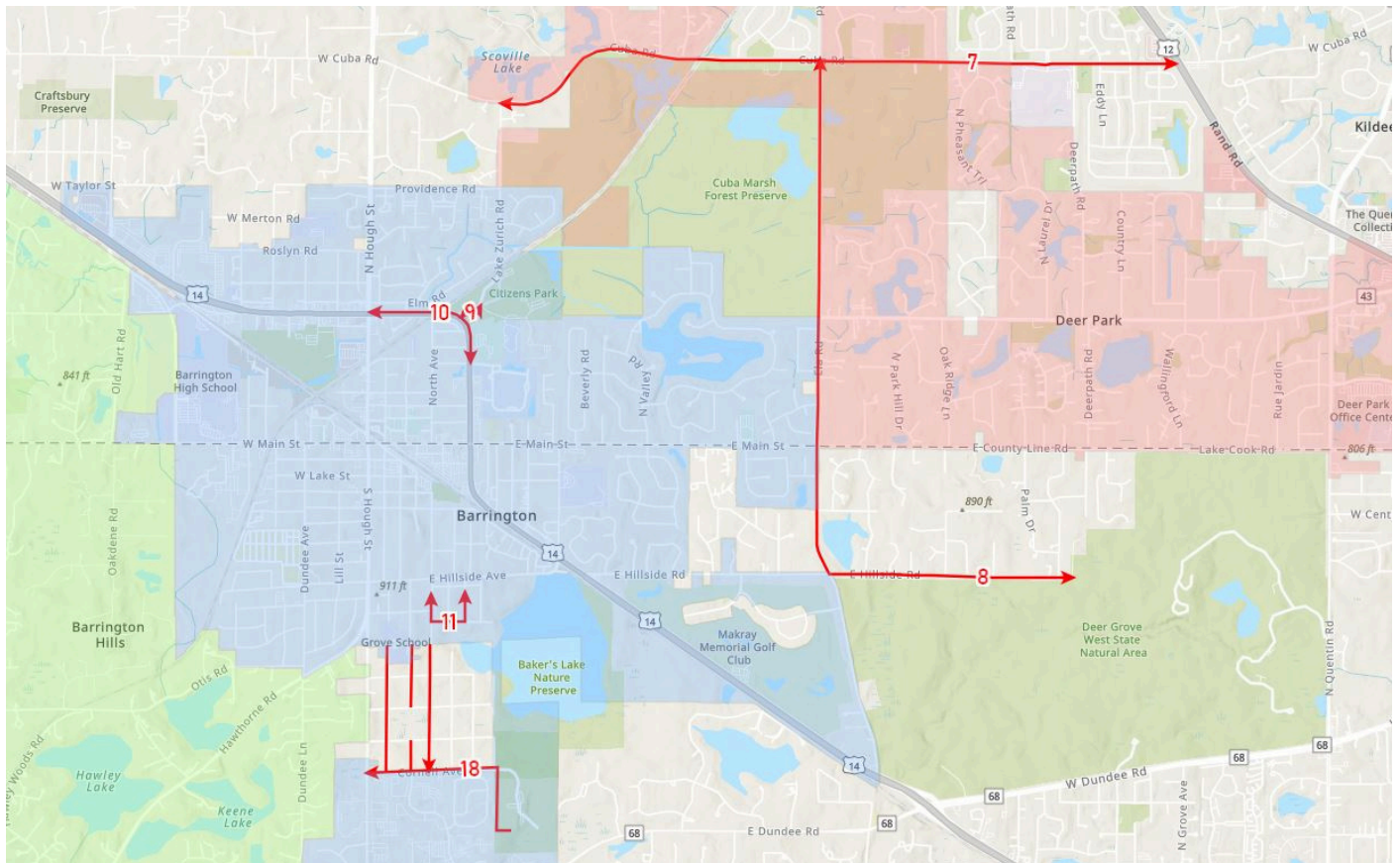
3. Permeable pathway on public/community property between Blue Stem Court and Tower Lakes Dam, connecting 3 neighborhoods and completing Village walkability goal.

4. Multi-use off-road path connecting neighborhoods to LCFPD trails from Miller Rd. to Roberts Rd.

5. Multi-use off-road path connecting neighborhoods to LCFPD trails and commercial centers from US Rte 14 to Miller Rd.

6. Multi-use off-road path connecting Fetherling Park to LCFPD Grassy Lake Forest Preserve.

INITIAL CENTRAL PROJECTS



7. Multi-use path along Cuba Rd. from Lake Zurich Rd. to Rand Rd. to connect neighborhoods, Village services, and Forest Preserve trails.

8. Multi-use path along Elm Rd. from Cuba Rd. to Hillside Rd. connecting neighborhoods and Forest Preserve trails.

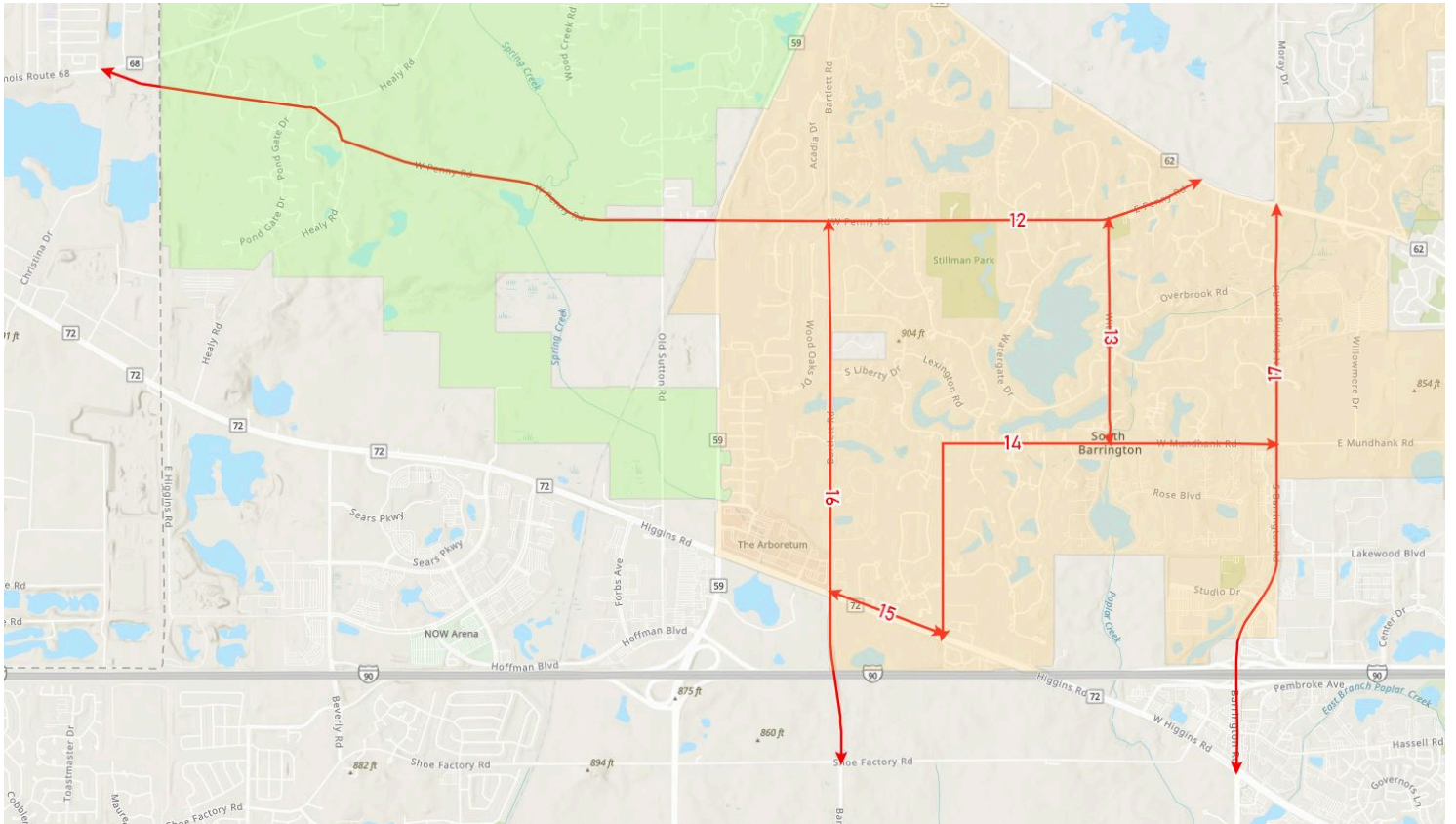
9. Multi-use path along Lake Zurich Rd. connecting Route 14 to Citizens Park.

10. Multi-use path on the north/east side of Route 14 between Route 59 and Valencia Avenue.

11. Sidewalk ramps, striped crosswalks, and sidewalk extensions along both sides of Prairie Ave. between Hillside Ave. and South St., & north side of South St.

18. Pedestrian safety improvements on multiple streets between Hillside and Ron Beese Park for safe access to elementary and middle schools, a Metra Station, and commercial areas.

INITIAL SOUTHERN PROJECTS



12. Multi-use off road path on Penny Rd. from Algonquin/Rte. 62 to Old Sutton/Rte. 59 to connect neighborhoods to forest preserve trails and Rose Elementary School.

13. Multi-use path on Witt Rd. from Penny to Mundhank for bike safety.

14. Multi-use path on Mundhank from Barrington Rd. to Higgins/72 connecting neighborhoods to commercial centers.

15. Multi-use path on Higgins from Bartlett to Mundhank, connecting residential, commercial, and FPCC trails.

16. Multi-use path on Bartlett Rd. connecting neighborhoods to 2 FPCC trails and Rose Elementary.

17. Multi-use path on Barrington Rd. from Algonquin Rd. south to the Forest Preserve.

IV. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Based on the Committee's work, BACOG created an interactive map of proposed projects, accompanied by a short survey, to gather opinions on potential improvements and the region's non-motorized transportation needs.

The Committee utilized the feedback to better understand regional community needs. They used the information to design this Regional Connectivity Plan, aiming to assist local governments, refine priorities, and guide future connectivity planning.

"There is no walking path or bike path for our children to get to school. ... It's hard for our children to safely get around."

"Routes moving through or around would provide the most benefit to the most residents of the planning area in terms of 'pedestrian access.'"

"Great ideas- more walkable neighborhoods are highly desirable. Enhances physical health, mental health, social interaction, air quality (less driving), and reduces noise pollution."

"I am very hopeful that these initiatives will increase access for bikers in the area!"

REACHING INTERESTED RESIDENTS

BACOG pursued multiple strategies to gather public input on the connectivity planning efforts, specific proposed projects, and distributed the survey to interested community members. This included:

- **BACOG Communications:**

- Monthly e-newsletter, The Director's Report
- Website
- Social Media Channels
- Flyers and posters with QR code at Annual Private Well Water Testing Event
- Poster with QR code in Barrington Hills Village Hall / BACOG office lobby (a polling site) throughout early voting period

- **BACOG Partners and Community Leaders:**

- BACOG provided newsletter / social media / website / e-blast materials to the following individuals and organizations for distribution to their constituents:
 - BACOG Members
 - BACOG Community Partners, including the Healthier Barrington Coalition members
 - State Senator Dan McConchie
 - State Representative Nabeela Syed
 - State Representative Martin McLaughlin
 - Cook County Commissioner Kevin Morrison
 - Lake County Board Member Marah Altenberg
 - Lake County Board Member Michael Danforth

- **BACOG Local Government Education Initiative (LGEI) Presentations:**

- Highlighted the survey during BACOG's 2024 LGEI presentations as an example of how to engage with local governments.

SURVEY RESULTS

- 225 total responses
- All 7 BACOG members represented
- An additional 41 respondents from outside BACOG communities or did not identify a community

Clear Messages from Respondents:

- Over 89% bike or walk for recreation or transportation. Over 50% of those do so multiple times per week.
- Over 95% support development of bike and pedestrian paths in the BACOG area.
- Preferred type of path (with over 80%) is an off-road trail designated for walking/biking.
- Support also shown for traveling on:
 - Residential roads with no shoulder or marked bike lane
 - Busier roads with paved shoulder

Emerging Themes

- Communities place a high priority on providing safe access to schools;
- There is significant interest in and a need for improved connections to existing paths and locations in the region (both commercial and recreational); and
- Residents are seeking safer ways to navigate major (busy) corridors such as Cuba Road, IL Route 59, US Route 14, Lake Cook Road, Barrington Road, Ela Road, Penny Road, etc.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the course of their work, the Connectivity Committee members considered:

- The Committee's guiding principles;
- Ongoing work by each BACOG member community to improve connections within their respective boundaries;
- Opportunities to coordinate with other governments to leverage public investments and secure the greatest benefits for area residents; and
- How to actively utilize feedback from area residents to ensure the resulting plan reflects their needs and priorities.

The BACOG communities are committed to working across governmental boundaries to create optimal connectivity for their residents and the broader region.

The Committee is confident that cooperation across governmental entities can be achieved and would considerably expand the reach of existing community resources to a much greater number of residents. The Committee recommends active pursuit of the following list of projects. These paths and transportation-related improvements reflect the Committee's guiding principles and the community's priorities. To aid implementation, the recommended projects are divided into three categories:

- **Actively Pursue:** Complete within 5 years
- **Include in Long-Range Plans:** Complete within 10 years
- **Success Stories:** Recently Completed or Underway

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

**ACTIVELY PURSUE:
COMPLETE WITHIN 1-5 YEARS**

BACOG Member	Project Location	Project Description	Coordination Required	Connection to County/IDOT Plan or Project	Additional Information	Theme from Public Comments	Guiding Principle
Deer Park	Cuba Road - between Rand Road and Lake Zurich Road	Biking/walking path to connect neighborhoods, Village services, and Forest Preserve trails from Lake Zurich to Cuba Marsh	Lake County DOT, Lake County Forest Preserve District; Village of Lake Zurich	LCDOT included re-paving of Cuba Road in 5 year road program	Identified in Comprehensive Plan; Benefits to Lake Zurich School District 95; Alternative is wider bike lane along the road. Deer Park is conducting a feasibility study.	2, 3	B, C
Tower Lakes	IL Route 59	Crosswalk at Essex Road/Indian Trail Rd. at existing traffic signal	IDOT		Identified in Comprehensive Plan; Actively engaged with IDOT for approval and permitting; Provides links between neighborhoods, village services, recreation areas, and TL Nature Preserve; Key project required to make the entire village walkable	2, 3	B
Tower Lakes	Open space between Blue Stem Court and Tower Lakes Dam	Safe pedestrian permeable pathway between neighborhoods within Tower Lakes (b/n West Side, Fenview Estates, and South Hills)	Tower Lakes Improvement Association; Fenview Estates HOA		Facilitates Comprehensive Plan goal to enhance walkability of entire Village	2, 3	B
Barrington Township	Multiple streets from Hillside to Ron Beese Park	Installation of pedestrian safety improvements (sidewalks, crosswalks, paths, striping, etc.)	Cook County DOT		Recommended by area residents, including students participating in BACOG LGEI, to increase pedestrian safety and access to Grove Elementary, BMS Prairie Campus, area parks, Metra Station, and commercial area of downtown Barrington.	1, 2	A, B, C
Barrington	Hillside Avenue & South Street	Sidewalk ramps, striped crosswalks and sidewalk extensions along both sides of Prairie Avenue between Hillside Avenue and South Street, along the north side of South Street, closing the gap in sidewalks along Summit Street near South Street			Selected for funding under Rebuild Illinois - Safe Routes to School grant program. \$250,000	1	A

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

BACOG Member	Project Location	Project Description	Coordination Required	Connection to County/IDOT Plan or Project	Additional Information	Theme from Public Comments	Guiding Principle
South Barrington	Penny Road	Multi-use off road path from Algonquin/Rte 62 to Old Sutton/Rte 59	Cook County DOT		Included in 2023 Invest in Cook application. Connects to Old Stover Trail and Paul Douglas Forest Preserve and Arboretum; Connects at least 9 subdivisions; Creates safe access to Rose Elementary	1, 2	A, B, C
South Barrington	Bartlett Road	Multi-use path connecting neighborhoods to 2 Forest Preserve Trails and to Rose Elementary	Cook County DOT		Included in 2023 Invest in Cook application. Provides biking/walking access to the Arboretum and Rose Elementary School; Connect to Shoe Factory Nature Preserve, Arthur L. Janura Preserve, and a path in neighboring Hoffman Estates	1, 2	A, B
Lake Barrington	Kelsey Road	Proposed off-street bike path connecting LCFPD's Grassy Lake Forest Preserve with the Village's Fetherling Park.	Lake County DOT	Included in Lake County DOT 2040 Plan; Not included in the LCDOT Five Year Plan	Anticipate applying for ITEP funding	2, 3	B
South Barrington	Mundhank Road	Multi-use path from Barrington Rd. to Higgins/72	Cook County DOT		Would provide access from a planned path along Barrington Rd. to neighborhood residents, improve safe access to Goebert's, and bring pedestrians and cyclists closer to The Arboretum	1(?), 2, 3	B, C
South Barrington	Barrington Road	Multi-use path from Algonquin road south to Forest Preserve	IDOT	Similar bike/walking path included with IDOT's plans to widen Barrington Road.	Would provide a connection to the existing path along Algonquin Road and into the Cook County Forest Preserve at Shoe Factory Road.	2, 3	B

Themes from Public Comment:

1. Safe access to schools
2. Connect existing paths
3. Safely navigate major corridors

Major Corridors:

Routes 59 and 14; Barrington Rd., Ela Rd., Cuba Rd., Kelsey Rd., Lake Cook Rd., River Rd., Roberts Rd.

Guiding Principle - Safe Access to:

- A. Schools
- B. Recreation areas
- C. Commercial areas and job centers

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

**INCLUDE IN LONG RANGE PLANS:
COMPLETE WITHIN 10 YEARS**

BACOG Member	Project Location	Project Description	Coordination Required	Connection to County/IDOT Plan or Project	Additional Information	Theme from Public Comments	Guiding Principle
Lake Barrington	River Road	Multi-use off road paths to connect existing Forest Preserve trails -- between existing trail access road north of Kelsey Rd to Roberts Rd.	Lake County DOT	Included in Lake County DOT 2040 Plan; Not included in the LCDOT Five Year Plan		2, 3	B
Lake Barrington	Kelsey Road	Multi-use off road paths to connect neighborhoods and Forest Preserve trails and commercial centers - from Route 14 to Miller Road	Lake County DOT	Included in Lake County DOT 2040 Plan; Not included in the LCDOT Five Year Plan		2, 3	B, C
Deer Park	Ela Road - between Cuba Road and Hillside Road	Biking/walking path to connect neighborhoods and Forest Preserve trails from Cuba Marsh to Deer Grove	Cook County Forest Preserve District, Lake County DOT, Lake County Forest Preserve District		Identified in Comprehensive Plan; facilitates safe street crossing and increased access to nature preserve trail system; longer term project given level of jurisdictional cooperation required	2, 3	B
South Barrington	Witt Road	Multi-use path from Penny to Mundank			Very narrow road with blind hills that is a popular connector for cyclists - a path would create a safer route for cyclists and pedestrians.		
South Barrington	Higgins Road	Multi-use path from Bartlett to Mundhank	IDOT		Would create almost a complete, safe trail loop around South Barrington, giving access to trails in all directions as well as most local businesses	2, 3	B, C

Themes from Public Comment:

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2. Connect existing paths
3. Safely navigate major corridors

Major Corridors:

Routes 59 and 14; Barrington Rd., Ela Rd., Cuba Rd., Kelsey Rd., Lake Cook Rd., River Rd., Roberts Rd.

Guiding Principle - Safe Access to:

- A. Schools
- B. Recreation areas
- C. Commercial areas and job centers

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

SUCCESS STORIES: RECENTLY COMPLETED OR UNDERWAY

BACOG Member	Project Location	Project Description	Coordination Required	Connection to County/IDOT Plan or Project	Additional Information	Theme from Public Comments	Guiding Principle
Tower Lakes	Roberts Road	Crosswalk at Circle Drive	Lake County DOT		Construction completed - crosswalk operational	2, 3	B
Barrington	Lake Zurich Road	Multi-use path from Rte 14 into Citizens Park	IDOT and other entities involved in Rte 14 grade separation	Rte 14 underpass construction			B
Barrington	U.S. Route 14	Multi-use path on the north/east side of Route 14 between Route 59 and Valencia Avenue	IDOT and other entities involved in Rte 14 grade separation	Rte 14 underpass construction		2, 3	B, C

Themes from Public Comment:

1. Safe access to schools
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Routes 59 and 14; Barrington Rd., Ela Rd., Cuba Rd., Kelsey Rd., Lake Cook Rd., River Rd., Roberts Rd.

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VI. CONCLUSION

Successful implementation of this plan will depend on several factors:

I. Available Resources

Funding will be a critical hurdle for each project recommended in this report – as it is for any major initiative. Each of these projects has the support of full region and would enhance the quality of life for numerous residents and communities. These projects are a great choice for funding programs that aim to provide or improve safe non-motorized access to schools, commercial and recreation areas, public transit, and job centers.

II. Intergovernmental Cooperation

BACOG communities recognize that projects within a single community can have significant benefits for the region as a whole. Those that cross municipal boundaries can have similar, and potentially greater, benefits for our residents. These projects require governments across the region, from municipalities and townships to counties, the State of Illinois, and even the federal government, to coordinate and work together toward implementation.

III. Continued Public Engagement

It is a key priority for local governments in the BACOG region to ensure a safe and vibrant community that reflects the needs and priorities of its residents. To achieve this goal, it is imperative to continue active engagement with area residents. Local governments need to keep listening – and adjust, when possible – to meet the changing needs of the community.



Barrington Area
Council of Governments

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